

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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INFO AMEMBSSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5506

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, GE, UR, WB
SUBJECT: ABRASIMOV ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND BERLIN

1. SUMMARY: IN A PRESS CONFERENCE IN THE SOVIET EMBASSY
IN EAST BERLIN MARCH 10, SOVIET AMBASSADOR PYOTR ABRASIMOV
HAD TOUGH WORDS TO SAY ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND WEST BERLIN.
ABRASIMOV TREATED THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTION IN HIS
INITIAL PRESENTATION, DEVOTED PRIMARILY TO PRAISING
SOVIET ECONOMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN THE ALMOST 60 YEARS
SINCE THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION. HIS COMMENT ON WEST BERLIN
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CAME IN RESPONSE TO JOURNALISTS'S QUESTIONS LATER IN THE
PRESS CONFERENCE (END SUMMARY.

2. IN HIS STATEMENT PRESENTED IN FULL IN NEUES DEUTSCH-
LAND MARCH 11, ABRASIMOV CLAIMED THE " SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES
HAVE DONE MORE THAN THE WEST IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND CULTURAL
EXCHANGE. THUS, THEY WOULD NOT ALLOW MORE IMPORTANT

QUESTIONS TO BE DROWNED OUT AT BELGRADE IN A " DEMAGOGIC BABBLE" ABOUT " SO-CALLED DISSIDENTS AND THEIR SO-CALLED RIGHTS." POINTING OUT THAT THE WESTERN PRESS HAD INCREASINGLY CREATED AN UPROAR OVER VIOLATION OF " SO CALLED HUMAN RIGHTS" IN THE SOVIET UNION, ABRASIMOV ASKED RHERORICALLY WHY" FAMOUS WESTERN POLITICAL FIGURES" NOW MEET OR CORRESPOND WITH A "PITFUL HANDFUL OF RENEGADES." HE THEN ASSERTED THAT IMPORTANT RIGHTS CONTAINED IN UN CONVENTIONS, SUCH AS THE RIGHT TO WORK, THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION AND OTHERS, WERE GUARANTEED IN THE SOVIET UNION BUT NOT IN THE WEST. THE US CONSTITUTION, FOR EXAMPLE, CONTAINED NO GUARANTEE OF THE RIGHT TO WORK.

3. THE REAL REASON FOR THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE SOVIET UNION, ABRASIMOV CHARGED, WAS A NEW ATTEMPT TO TORPEDO DETENTE, UNDERMINE SOCIALISM FROM WITHIN, AND WEAKEN THE POSITION OF THE " SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES. IN ABRASIMOV'S OPINION THIS ATTACK HAD BEEN INITIATED BECAUSE THE FORCES OF REACTION FEARED THE EVIDENT SUCCESSES OF SOCIALISM. ABRASIMOV WARNED THAT THE SOCIALIST STATES WOULD CONTINUE TO COUNTER THOSE WHO SOUGHT TO MISUSE THEIR EFFORTS AT COOPERATION AND WHO CREATED FAIRY TALES ABOUT " LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD AND THE WOLF." THE SOCIALIST BLOC'S PROPOSALS ON DISARMAMENT AND ECONOMIC AND HUMANITARIAN COOPERATION WERE MEANT IN EARNEST, ABRASIMOV CONCLUDED, AND SHOULD BE REALIZED.

4. ACCORDING TO THE ADN ACCOUNT OF ABRASIMOV'S REMARKS ON BERLIN, HE ARGUED THAT SINCE NEITHER "GREATER BERLIN" CONFIDENTIAL

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NOR "BERLIN" WERE MENTIONED IN THE QA, THE AGREEMENT APPLIED TO WEST BERLIN ALONE. THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT OF THE AGREEMENT WAS THAT WEST BERLIN, DUE TO ITS " SPECIAL POLITICAL STATUS," WAS NOT PART OF THE FRG AND COULD NOT BE GOVERNED BY IT.

5. ABRASIMOV CLAIMED THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD REGISTERED ABOUT 40 VIOLATIONS OF THE QA IN THE PAST YEAR, AND WARNED THAT THOSE WHO ATTEMPTED TO VIOLATE OR INTERPRET THINGS INTO THE AGREEMENT, OR WHO WANTED SOMETHING MORE FROM THE GDR, WOULD HAVE NO SUCCESS AND WOULD ONLY EXACERBATE THE SITUATION.

6. AFTER EMPHASISING THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS FOR THE "UNALTERABLE OBSERVANCE" OF THE QA, ABRASIMOV TURNED TO WESTERN RIGHTS IN BERLIN, STATING: "AS FAR AS RIGHTS, MILITARY RIGHTS OF THE THREE WESTERN POWERS IN THE 'EASTERN PART OF THE CITY' ARE CONCERNED, I MUST SAY, THAT THESE DO NOT EXIST. THERE IS NO EASTERN PART, THERE

IS ONLY A CAPITAL OF THE GDR. CONCERNING THE RIGHTS OF THE THREE POWERS, WE DO NOT DENY THEIR RIGHTS IN WEST BERLIN, FOR THERE THREE OCCUPATION ZONES ACTUALLY STILL EXIST."

7. ADN REPORTS THAT AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE, ABRASIMOV EMPHASIZED SOVIET INTEREST IN THE CONTINUATION AND STABILIZATION OF DETENTE AS WELL AS IN WORLDWIDE DISARMAMENT. ON RELATIONS WITH THE US, HE REPORTEDLY DECLARED THAT THE GREAT POWERS SHOULD FIND A COMMON LANGUAGE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO ALLOW AGREEMENTS ON LIMITING STRATEGIC ARMAMENTS, ENDING THE ARMS RACE, AND REDUCING TROOP STRENGTH.

8. ABRASIMOV DEVOTED THE MAJORITY OF HIS OPENING STATEMENTS TO SOVIET ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SOVIET-GDR RELATIONS. IN LAUDING EVER CLOSER COOPERATION WITH THE GDR ON THE BASIS OF THE 1975 SOVIET-GDR TREATY, ABRASIMOV
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EMPHASIZED THE BENEFITS THAT ACCURED TO THE GDR IN THIS RELATIONSHIP AND DISMISSED ALLEGATIONS BY SOME " GDR SPECIALISTS" AND " SOVIETOLOGISTS" THAT ECONOMIC TIES TO THE SOVIET UNION ARE DISADVANTAGEOUS TO THE GDR.

9. COMMENT: ABRASIMOV'S STATEMENTS ARE CHARACTERIZED BY A COMBATATIVE TONE, PARTICULARLY ON HUMAN RIGHTS. HIS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNTEROFFENSIVE RELIES ON THE ACCUSATIONS OF WESTERN FAILURE TO ASSURE SUCH RIGHTS AS THE RIGHT TO WORK, AN APPROACH THAT HAS INCREASED NOTICEABLY IN THE GDR PRESS IN RECENT WEEKS AS WELL. ABRASIMOV'S CRITICISM OF WESTERN " POLITICAINS" WHO HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH EASTERN DISSIDENTS IS TH STRONGEST IMPLIED CRITICISM OF THE ADMINISTRATION THAT HAS APPEARED IN THE GDR PRESS TO DATE, BUT IS BALANCED SOMEWHAT BY THE FACT THAT HE UNDERSCORED SOVIET INTEREST IN DETENTE AND DISARMAMENT.

10. WHILE ABRASIMOV'S INSISTENCE THAT THE QA APPLIES ONLY TO WEST BERLIN IS NOT NEW, HIS MENTION OF THE ABSENCE OF WESTERN ALLIED RIGHTS IN EAST BERLIN IS MORE DISTURBING. THE FACT THAT ABRASIMOV TREATED THE ISSUE AT ALL, ALONG WITH HIS DENIAL OF WESTERN ALLIED MILITARY RIGHTS IN EAST BERLIN, MAY BE INTENDED TO SUGGEST THAT ALLIED MILITARY TOURS TO EAST BERLIN MAY BECOME A PRESSURE POINT IN THE FUTURE.

11. WE NOTE THAT THE EAST GERMAN PRESS FAILED TO MENTION AN ABRASIMOV STATEMENT ON EUROCOMMUNISM REPORTED BY WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS WHO COVERED THE PRSS CONFERENCE. ACCORDING TO THESE WESTERN REPORTS, ABRASIMOV LABELED EUROCOMMUNISM AN ATTEMPT TO SPLIT THE

COMMUNIST MOVEMENT.

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